THE WESTMINSTER VERSION OF THE SACRED SCRIPTURES:

A NEW TRANSLATION FROM THE ORIGINAL GREEK AND HEBREW TEXTS

THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE BOOK OF MALACHY

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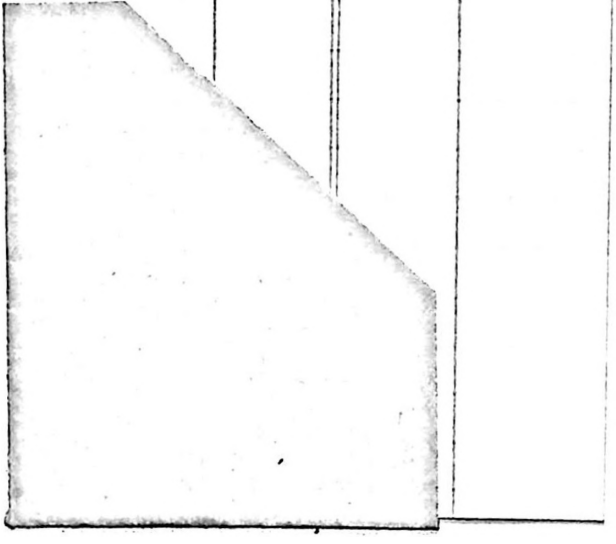

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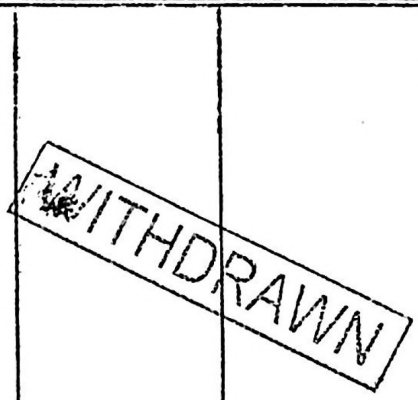

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THE WESTMINSTER VERSION OF
THE SACRED SCRIPTURES

THE OLD TESTAMENT

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THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE BOOK OF MALACHY

BY
THE REV. CUTHBERT LATTEY, S.J.

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PREFACE

The New Testament in the *Westminster Version of the Sacred Scriptures* is now approaching completion; an abridged edition is also in preparation. The Old Testament promises to be a slower and heavier task, not merely because of the quality and quantity of the work involved, but chiefly by reason of the cost of production. Any help, therefore, in this kind will be welcome, and most of all the financing in whole or part of individual books, a benefaction which will meet with due recognition in the works thus issued. Each book will be published as an independent whole.

C.L.

SOME TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

O.T. is used for 'Old Testament'.

The 'massoretic' text is the traditional Jewish Hebrew text, which alone has been copied in Hebrew manuscripts.

The 'pointing' of the Hebrew text by systems of signs indicating the vowels and serving originally to control the public reading, *etc.*, was gradually developed by Jewish grammarians in the 6th and 7th centuries A.D.

The 'targums' are the Aramaic paraphrases of the Hebrew Bible, finally edited in the 5th century A.D. and afterwards.

The 'Septuagint' is the oldest Greek translation of the Old Testament, made before the time of Christ by the Jews and used officially by the Greek Christians.

Aquila, a Jewish proselyte, made another and very literal translation in the 2nd century A.D.

The 'Vulgate' is the Latin translation of the Bible made for the most part by St. Jerome from the original languages at the end of the 4th and beginning of the 5th centuries A.D. It gradually came to be the official Latin version.

The 'Peshitta' is the standard Syriac version.

'Hoonacker' signifies *Les Douze Petits Prophètes*, the large edition of the minor prophets edited by Canon van Hoonacker of Louvain (Paris, 1908).

SUMMARY OF INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

1. Prophet and Prophecy.

It has been thought by some that this prophecy is anonymous, and that the word Malachy (Heb. *Male'akhi*) prefixed thereto is taken from iii. 1, where the same Hebrew word certainly means 'my messenger'. But this use of the first person possessive suffix, 'my', without further explanation in the title of a book would be very strange, nor is there any sign that the author himself claimed to be the messenger of iii. 1; while the anonymous title would be all the stranger if he did not claim to be so.

If on the other hand, as from all analogy is much more likely, the title prefixed is a proper name, it would still be strange to understand the name to mean 'my messenger'. It is more natural to suppose it to mean either 'Jehovah is messenger', or 'messenger of Jehovah'. That the final *i* can stand for *Yahu* or *Yah*, a form of *Yahweh* or (to give the usual but mistaken English form) 'Jehovah', is clear from a number of examples, such as *Uri* for *Uriah*. And this interpretation is supported by the Greek and Latin form of the name, *Malachias* (Μαλαχίας), which obviously represents a longer form containing the divine name itself at the end, and not merely the long vowel.

We appear, then, to have the author's name; but nothing further is known about him except from the words of this prophecy, which show him possessed of an especial zeal for the seemly worship of God, and commissioned in this regard to utter one of the most momentous prophecies of the Old Testament.

In the prophecy itself there is a peculiar element of dialogue; and occasionally a supposed protest is interjected against a charge before the latter is pushed home (i. 2—3, 6—7: *etc.*). In this occasional use of dialogue the prophecy bears some little resemblance to the Song of Songs (Canticle

of Canticles). Some metrical rhythm also appears to be discernible. Prof. Powis Smith, indeed, has written strongly in the *International Critical Commentary* (p. 5) that 'if Malachi is to be regarded as poetical, either in form or content, distinctions between poetry and prose must be abandoned'. It may be admitted that in the Old Testament the distinction is at times a thin one. Nevertheless, the metrical arrangement in the Kittel bible has a sufficient foundation in beats and parallelism to command a reasonable assent in principle, and the attempt is here made to interpret it in English lines. It does not appear sufficiently certain, however, to warrant tampering with the text, nor yet is it followed slavishly where a slight disregard of it appears to produce in the English a closer resemblance to the biblical balance of words.

The unity of this short work is not so seriously attacked as to need explicit defence here, but will be found sufficiently indicated (it is hoped) in the footnotes, if the text itself be pondered with care. The last difficulty mentioned in this Introduction (pp. xxxii—xxxiv) as put forward against the Eucharistic interpretation of i. 11 might possibly be understood to contain an attack upon the unity of the whole prophecy.

2. The Date of Composition.

The use of the word *pechah* for 'governor' in i. 8, an Assyrian term used by the Persians, confirms the universal tradition that the prophecy was written after the return of the Jews from the Babylonian exile, effected under the Persian Cyrus. The Temple has been rebuilt and the worship restored (i. 10: iii. 1, 10); but there is no suggestion that these are recent events, indeed, the impression left is rather that the first fervour has been succeeded by a spirit of routine and weariness (i. 6—8, 12—14: iii. 8—10). Now in the second year of Darius (Hagg. i. 1: ii. 1, 10, 20: 520 B.C.) the Temple was not yet built (Hagg. i. 4, 9: ii. 15—19), nor yet two years later (Zech. vii. 1: viii. 8);

it was finished, in fact, in 515 B.C., as we know from Ezra vi. 15. The obscure period which intervened between this event and the coming of Ezra in 458 B.C. (the interval, that is, between the events of Ezra vi and Ezra vii) was evidently a time of decline, such as would account for the state of affairs depicted in Malachy; the enthusiasm enkindled by Haggai and Zechariah (*cf.* Ezra v. 1: vi. 14) did not long survive.

A later limit for the writing of the prophecy, if such be needed, is supplied by Ecclesiasticus ('the Wisdom of the Son of Sirach'), though in this case it is a limit separated by a far longer interval from the writing of the book. From the mention of 'the twelve prophets' in Ecclcus. xlix. 10 (12) it is reasonable to conclude that the works of the minor prophets had already been brought together, and in Ecclcus. xlviii. 10 we have a clear reference to Mal. iii. 24. From the translator's prologue to Ecclesiasticus we learn that he found (or at least had before him) the Hebrew text in 132 B.C.; and since the author was his grandfather, we may put the writing of it in the early part of the 2nd century B.C. It may be mentioned that both the passages above referred to are in the extant Hebrew portions of Ecclesiasticus.

It is generally agreed, however, that it is possible to fix the date of the book with far greater precision, by reason of its intimate connexion with the book of Nehemiah (also called the second book of Ezra or Esdras, and recognized by all as canonical Scripture). 'The Book of Malachi', says Prof. Powis Smith in the *International Critical Commentary* (p. 7), 'fits the situation amid which Nehemiah worked as snugly as a bone fits its socket'. At all events to a noteworthy extent the same abuses are attacked by both. (1) The attack upon heathen marriages in Mal. ii. 10—12 finds a striking echo in Neh. xiii. 23—31, with which may also be noted Neh. x. 28—30: Ezra ix—x. Malachy adds the fact that Hebrew wives are being divorced (ii. 13—16). (2) In the same way the reproach about tithes in Mal. iii. 8—12 is reflected in Neh. xiii. 10—13, with which should also be compared Neh. x. 32—39. (3) The 'defiling of the

priesthood' in Neh. xiii. 29 seems to have a wider reference than to the foreign marriages, and finds an ample parallel in Mal. i. 6—ii. 9. (4) The short reference to social conditions in Mal. iii. 5 probably finds illustration in Neh. v. 1—13.

On the other hand, Nehemiah has not yet arrived at Jerusalem; not only is there no reference to him in the prophecy, but the allusion to a governor accepting gifts in Mal. i. 8 positively excludes Nehemiah, who expressly states that he took no such gifts (*cf.* Neh. v. 15, 18). We are thus led to date the prophecy shortly before Nehemiah's arrival; and as there is no mention even of Ezra, it seems best to place it in the years immediately preceding Ezra's arrival, at the end of the period of decline already indicated, about 460 B.C. or a few years earlier.

An attempt has been made to throw further light upon the date of the prophecy by relating it to the 'documentary hypothesis' and the supposed evolution of legal codes to be traced in the Pentateuch. So large an issue need hardly be discussed here, for its bearing upon Malachy is in any case very doubtful. It may be enough to point out that there is no serious ground for asserting that Malachy considers all levites to be priests. More than once he addresses the priests as such (i. 6: ii. 1: *cf.* ii. 7), evidently regarding them as directly charged with the offering of the sacrifices; and the fact that he brings up against them 'the covenant of Levi' (ii. 4, 8) need only mean that this covenant chiefly regarded the priests, not that they alone were embraced in it. As for iii. 3, it is not clear that 'the sons of Levi' are there to be understood as offering sacrifices at all; the translation here adopted ('there shall be they that offer') follows that put forward by the Jewish Publication Society of America (Chicago, 1917: 'there shall be they that shall offer') and by the French Crampon bible (Paris, 1905: *Jéhovah aura des hommes qui lui présenteront*). Even if the sons of Levi *are* to be understood as offering the sacrifices, this could well be regarded as the corporate office of the whole tribe of Levi, the mere levites assisting the priests in the ceremonies (*cf.*

Num. xviii. 1—7, *etc.*), but the latter alone performing the sacrificial acts. Such matters are not to be determined from Malachy alone; they have been studied, for example, in the volume *Moses and the Law* (London, 1922), edited by the present writer, in the essay, 'Wellhausen and the Levitical Priesthood'.

It may also be observed that Prof. van Hoonacker in his important work, *Les Douze Petits Prophètes* (Paris, 1908: p. 699), assigns Malachy to 450—445 B.C.; but it is a complication in his treatment of the matter that he puts Ezra vii—x after Nehemiah's two visits to Jerusalem. This again is a view that does not call for serious discussion here, and all the less so because the date of Malachy is not greatly affected.

3. The Eucharistic Prophecy.

The book of Malachy, the last of the prophecies according to the biblical order, and perhaps the last to be delivered, fittingly contains a prediction of the new order of things which is to come, and it strikes at the very root of the matter in foretelling the abolition of the sacrifices of the Old Covenant, and the institution of a world-wide sacrifice in the New. To such as reject all prophecies *a priori* the following elucidation of the matter can make no appeal. It must be enough to say here that such a rejection is not based on historical evidence or historical principles, but upon presuppositions that only too often are unsifted and unavowed; and that explanations are put forward of prophecy which the prophets themselves, as all the available evidence goes to show, would certainly have rejected indignantly as ranging them with the false prophets whom they so often attacked.

The central prophecy is contained in i. 11, and it seems best to give the whole discussion of the verse at once in the Introduction, thus relieving the commentary of a disproportionately long note, and at the same time securing greater clearness by keeping all that needs to be said in one place. The verse should, however, be studied in the light of the whole context (i. 6—14), whereof it is the climax.

The words 'from the rising of the sun even unto the setting thereof', signify 'from east to west', as in Ps. l (xlix). 1 and elsewhere, and are equivalent to 'in every place'; the second three lines of the verse explain the first three. There is no direct reference to time. The fifth line ('There shall be sacrifice, there shall be offering') represents two passive participles taken impersonally. About the meaning of the second there is no serious doubt; the verb in the Hiphil or causative voice is often used of sacrifice. But about the first (*muqtar*) there is some debate. The history of the root seems to be best explained by supposing that in the primitive and common semitic language it meant 'incense', or some aromatic plant or product used for such purposes. Thus in Muss-Arnolt's *Concise Dictionary of the Assyrian Language* (Berlin, 1905) of the words under this root we find *qutru* rendered 'smoke', and also as 'a plant', and *qutrinnu* as 'incense', 'incense-offering', 'smoke-offering'. The 'plant' might be a plant used for incense, and 'smoke' would be a meaning naturally derived from 'incense'. In the *Arabic-English Dictionary* of Father Hava, S.J. (Beirut, 1921), the corresponding roots (*qtr* and *qṭr*) are seen to bear (though not exclusively) such meanings as 'aloes-wood', which is evidently akin to that of 'incense'; and of the doubtless allied roots '*tr* and '*ṭr* the former is connected both with 'slaughter' and 'sacrifice' on the one hand, and 'marjoram', 'musk', *etc.*, on the other, while the latter centres round the meaning 'perfume'. The meaning of 'smoke' as such hardly seems to be felt in Arabic.

In Hebrew the central meaning for the root *qtr* again appears to be 'incense'; but incense is always connected with sacrifice, and hence 'to burn incense' comes to have the general meaning of 'to burn sacrificially', and hence 'to sacrifice' generally. Thus the verb of which there is here question (Mal. i. 11) is used with the cognate word meaning 'incense' in I Sam. (Kings) ii. 28 and elsewhere, where the meaning is clearly to burn incense sacrificially or liturgically; and in II Chron. (Paral.) xxvi. 16—19 it is used absolutely where the context shows that there is still question of burn-

ing incense sacrificially or liturgically, both the word 'incense' in the 16th verse and 'censer' in the 19th being in fact cognate words from the same root. The verb is used in the sense of 'burn sacrificially' in I Sam. (Kings) ii. 15—16 (where it is used of the fat of the victims) and elsewhere, and it may be from this sense that it comes to mean 'sacrifice' simply, as in I (III) Kings xiii. 1—2 and often; but it is even more likely that this general usage comes from the sacrificial and liturgical use of incense, and indeed it is difficult to be sure that the thought of this latter is ever entirely absent from the general meaning.

There is no reason to suppose that 'smoke' as such is included in the meaning of the verb. The only cognate word from the same root which seems to mean or imply 'smoke' is *qitor*, which occurs twice in Gen. xix. 28, and perhaps bears this sense also in Ps. cxix (cxviii). 83: cxlviii. 8.[1] The *Oxford Hebrew Dictionary*[2] works out the meaning of all the cognate words from the fundamental meaning of 'smoke', but in most cases it brings in the idea of 'smoke' quite unwarrantably, as when in the Canticle (iii. 6) the litter is said in the dictionary to be 'fumigated', when the meaning is rather 'perfumed'. This somewhat perverse handling of the word is in fact due to Wellhausen,[3] who found it more convenient to postpone as late as possible the date of such a liturgical use as that of incense. But such prepossessions must be disregarded in any serious examination of the word, and the general meaning, 'there shall be sacrifice', must be presumed here (Mal. i. 11) as so often elsewhere, but still with the possibility (which must also be reckoned with elsewhere) that the special meaning of incense ('incense shall be burnt') has not really been lost, but is explicitly contained in the word.

Some, indeed, with the Septuagint, take this word (*muqtar*), not as a participle at all, but as a noun, meaning

[1] *Cf. Biblica*, vol. 7, pp. 182–192: vol. 8, pp. 53—54.

[2] ed. Brown, Driver and Briggs: Oxford, 1906.

[3] See his *Prolegomena to the History of Israel*, Engl. transl., pp. 64 ff., and (*e.g.*) Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible*, s.v. incense.

'incense' itself, but there is no other example of such a noun. Some other suggestions must be passed over without discussion, such as Hoonacker's change of the vowels and rendering as 'a smoking sacrifice', and also the proposal to delete the second participle as a mere gloss upon the first.

Nor is there any need to remove the letter *waw* before the word for 'oblation' (*minchah*), or with the Vulgate and Syriac text to transfer it so as to make it connect the two participles. In the text it is given a recognized explicative meaning ('even'), but if *muqtar* were taken as 'incense' the *waw* would bear its commonest meaning of 'and': 'incense shall be offered, and a pure oblation'. The word *minchah* may be used in the general sense of 'oblation' or 'sacrifice', as everywhere else in the prophecy (*i.e.*, i. 10, 13: ii. 12—13: iii. 3—4), but in view of the application of the prophecy and word to the Holy Eucharist, as set forth below, the peculiar fitness should be noticed of its specific and common meaning of 'grain-offering'.

The verse has been translated in the future sense, though nothing in it grammatically compels this; the time is determined by the use of the 'imperfect' in i. 10 ('neither will I accept'), which is the tense regularly used for the future, and is universally so understood here. This is moreover confirmed by the general sense, for the verse clearly represents a state of things not yet existing, but which is to replace the present condition of affairs. In i. 11, 'my name shall be great', the 'shall be' according to Hebrew usage is not expressed, and grammatically present or past time might be indicated, as again in the last words of the chapter. The two participles in the 5th line of the verse are also, strictly speaking, indifferent to time; but it should be observed that the participle is regularly used in Hebrew to signify the future as imminent, or vividly represented to be imminent (*cf.* Gesenius-Kautzsch, *Hebrew Grammar*, Engl. transl., ed. 2, no. 116 *p.*), and that this usage is especially common in Malachy (ii. 3: iii. 1, 23), so that the participles even in themselves rather favour a future sense.

4. The Fulfilment of the Prophecy.

We come now to the fulfilment of the prophecy, noting at once the sharp and detailed antithesis. 'Every place' is opposed to the Temple, of which alone there has been question (*e.g.*, in 'the gates' and 'mine altar', i. 10). It has already been mentioned that the words, 'from the rising of the sun even unto the setting thereof', signify place rather than time, which latter therefore does not enter directly into the antithesis. But the sacrifices from the gentiles are chosen instead of those from the Jews, sacrifices wherein Jehovah's name shall be magnified instead of the present irreverence, pure sacrifices instead of the blemished victims whereof he is complaining.

If then all the points of the prophecy be taken into careful account, it will be seen that it is fulfilled in the holy sacrifice of the Mass, wherein by a great mystery the pure Victim is offered everywhere among the gentiles, one and the same Victim that was offered on Calvary, the God-man who mystically renews that offering of Himself through the ministry of His priests. Nothing else can be said to fulfil this prophecy: if it is not fulfilled in the Mass, it is not fulfilled at all, but was a vain saying: contrariwise, with those who believe in Holy Scripture it must be a great argument in favour of the Mass that it has this mighty prophecy behind it.

In the light of what has been said it is worth while to turn back to the question of incense, which (as has been said) it is possible to suppose implied in the prophecy, though this seems the less likely interpretation. It may at first sight seem strange that such a mere adjunct to the sacrifice should be noticed in this way, especially since it does not appear to have been introduced into the liturgy, at all events to any large extent, before the second half of the fourth century.[1] But the religious discussions of our own land in our own time have made it clear that the peculiar symbolism of incense makes it a valuable safeguard of the true doctrine of

[1] *Cf. Dictionnaire d'Archéologie chrétienne*, s.v. *encens.*

the Holy Eucharist in general, and of the sacrificial aspect thereof in particular; so that in the light of our modern experience it is easy to see a divine purpose in the especial emphasis laid upon it. In itself it is nothing, but there is much importance in what it has always been taken to signify; it imports adoration and sacrifice. Even those who reject these latter have not failed to understand the symbolism of incense, against which therefore they have likewise protested.

5. The Prophecy in Scripture and Tradition.

Taken in a wider sense, the history of the interpretation of this prophecy might be called the history of the Mass; but it must be enough here to deal briefly with the passages of Holy Writ more immediately relevant, with the earliest interpretations, and with the more important objections to the explanations already offered.

In this prophecy it is evidently a non-Aaronic sacrifice that is indicated, and in Ps. cx (cix). 4 the Messiah is portrayed as a non-Aaronic priest, so that the two passages are complementary to each other. The Messiah could not in any case be an Aaronic priest, since he was to belong, not to the tribe of Levi, but to that of Judah (Gen. xlix. 10: Mic. v. 2: *etc.*); but in this psalm it is expressly said that he is to be a priest for ever after the manner of Melchizedek, the full significance of which statement is to be seen in the Epistle to the Hebrews, especially in chap. vii. Our Lord Himself seems to be alluding to Mal. i. 11 in Matt. viii. 11: Luke xiii. 29, and all the more so because He is speaking of the supplanting of the Jews by the gentiles, a theme especially prominent in St. Matthew's gospel (where see Introd., p. xxviii). There is probably an allusion to the verse in Apoc. xv. 4, but without immediate reference to the Jews. In I Cor. x. 21 there is quite a clear reference to Mal. i. 7, 12; in the latter verse 'table of the Lord' is the Hebrew reading itself, but in the former verse it would also be read in the current Greek Old Testament, the Septuagint, be-

cause the Jews would not pronounce the divine name 'Yahweh' ('Jehovah'), but read 'Lord' instead, which latter alone the Greek Septuagint translated, like the Latin Vulgate later on. In Malachy 'the table of Jehovah' or 'of the Lord' is clearly a sacrificial table, in fact the main altar of the Temple, as in Ezek. xli. 22: xliv. 16. There is probably no reference to the table or altar of the 'loaves of proposition' (or 'shewbread', *lit.*, 'bread of the Presence': Exod. xxv. 30, *etc.*). It is certainly in this sacrificial sense that St. Paul understands 'the table of the Lord', for he contrasts it sharply with 'the table of devils', where there can be no doubt from the whole context (I Cor. vi. 12—14: viii. 1—13: x. 14—xi. 1) that he has in mind the partaking with idolatrous purpose of victims already sacrificed, wherein there would be intended communion with the altar, and through the altar with the false gods whom the altar in a manner represented. This in itself is the true view of an altar,[1] which St. Paul is evidently applying to the Holy Eucharist itself, and which for him makes the Eucharistic table the true table or altar of the true God, whereby communion is established with Him. There is all the less reason for doubting St. Paul's mind on the point precisely because the two mentions of 'the table of the Lord' or Jehovah immediately precede and follow the present prophecy.

To come now to early Christian tradition, St. Justin Martyr in his *Dialogue with the Jew Trypho* insists on the prophecy with some emphasis. Dr. Lukyn Williams, who has brought out a translation of the *Dialogue* with introduction and notes (S.P.C.K., 1930), dates it between 155 and 161 A.D., and thinks that it was written in Rome (p. x). The prophecy is first quoted in xxviii. 5, but with little or no comment. In xli. 2—3 Justin writes as follows:

> Therefore of the sacrifices then offered by you God says, as I mentioned before, through Malachy, one of the twelve[2]: *My pleasure is not in you, saith the Lord, and your sacrifices I will not*

[1] *Cf.* Matt. xxiii. 17, 19: Père de la Taille, *Mysterium Fidei*, ed. 2, pp. 153, 156.

[2] *i.e.*, the twelve minor prophets.

accept from your hands. For from the rising of the sun unto the setting my name hath been glorified among the nations, and in every place incense is offered to my name, and a pure sacrifice; for my name is great among the nations, saith the Lord, but you profane it. Of the sacrifices offered to Him in every place by us the nations, that is, of the bread of the Eucharist, and of the cup likewise of the Eucharist, he then prophesies, saying that we glorify his name, but that you profane it.

One other passage is worth quoting at some length, because it not only gives his view of this prophecy, but also what was the current Jewish objection; and it contains words which are urged against what is (after all) the obvious interpretation of his meaning. The following is taken from chap. cxvii, with some insignificant omissions:

God therefore bears witness by anticipation that all[1] sacrifices in this name, which Jesus Christ delivered to be made, that is to say, at the Eucharist[2] of the bread and of the cup, which are made in every place on earth by the Christians, are well-pleasing to Him. But those which are made by you and through those priests of yours he rejects, saying: *And your sacrifices I will not accept from your hands; for from the rising of the sun unto the setting my name hath been glorified, he saith, among the nations, but you profane it.* And even until now you wrangle, saying that God would not accept the sacrifices in Jerusalem at the hands of those who were then dwelling there and were called Israelites, but that he said he received the prayers of the men of that race who were then in the Dispersion, and that he called their prayers sacrifices. Now therefore that both prayers and Eucharists[3] performed by the worthy are the only sacrifices which are perfect and well-pleasing

[1] reading πάσας οὖν διά with Maranus' note in the Migne edition, and with Dr. Lukyn Williams.

[2] Such is the Greek word, the ordinary meaning of which is 'thanksgiving'; but Justin plainly intends the Christian sense of 'Eucharist.'

[3] As has been said, the word also means 'thanksgiving'; but the words which follow once more make it clear that Justin has in mind the special kind of 'thanksgiving' which is the Eucharist, and that he means the prayers which accompany sacrifices in general, and the Eucharist in particular: see the preceding note, and those on p. xxviii. It is implied that in Malachy the Jewish sacrifices are rejected for lack of such worthy prayers.

to God, I also affirm. For these alone Christians also have been taught to offer, even at the remembrance of their food, both dry and liquid, wherein they make remembrance of the suffering which the Son of God suffered for their sake.[1] But the high priests and teachers of your people have caused his name to be profaned and blasphemed throughout the earth.[2] . . . Now both you and your teachers deceive yourselves when you declare that the passage was speaking of those of your race who were in the Dispersion, in that it said that their prayers and sacrifices, made in every place, were clean and acceptable. Learn now that you are speaking falsely and are trying in every way to deceive yourselves. For firstly, even now your race is not *from the rising of the sun unto the setting*, but there are nations among which none of your race has ever yet dwelt. But there is not one race of men at all . . . among whom prayers and Eucharists are not performed to the Father and Maker of all things through the name of Jesus who was crucified. And we know that at the actual time when the prophet Malachy said this, your dispersion over all the earth, so far as you are now there, had not yet taken place.

Thus Justin is content to point out that even in his own time, but much more in that of Malachy, the Jews were not 'in every place'. He does not go on to protest against the 'sacrifice' of Malachy being understood as prayers, although it is possible that originally he meant to do so, inasmuch as in the Greek it is even plainer than in the above translation that his 'firstly' is not followed by other arguments. But he is evidently not prepared to understand prayers by themselves as being sacrifices, without the Eucharist, nor does he admit that Christians in general would so understand the prophecy.

From Justin we may turn to St. Irenaeus, who wrote a little later than Justin and made some use of his writings. Irenaeus is an important witness both for East and West, inasmuch as he was familiar with St. Polycarp in Asia Minor before he became bishop of Lyons, and he was also acquainted

[1] *Cf.* I Cor. xi. 24—26. 'the remembrance of their food,' as Justin at once explains, means that the eating itself *is* the remembrance, their 'food-remembrance.'

[2] Justin in *Dial.* xvii. 1 says that emissaries were sent out from Jerusalem to oppose Christianity.

with the Roman Church. He writes as follows (*Haer.* iv. 17):

(Christ) took bread which is of creation[1] and gave thanks,[2] saying, 'This is my body'. And the cup likewise, which is of the same creation as ourselves, he declared to be his blood, and taught the new oblation of the New Testament. This the Church received from the apostles, and throughout the whole world offers to God, to him who affords us food, as firstfruits of his gifts in the New Testament: of which testament Malachy among the twelve prophets thus foretold: *My pleasure is not in you, saith the Lord Almighty, and I will not accept a sacrifice from your hands. For from the rising of the sun even to the setting my name is glorified among the nations, and in every place incense is offered to my name, and a pure sacrifice; for my name is great among the nations, saith the Lord Almighty.* By which words he very evidently signifies that the former people indeed shall cease to offer to God, yet that in every place a sacrifice will be offered to him, and that a pure one, and that his name is glorified among the nations.

One more example of early interpretation may suffice, taken from the *Didache* (chap. xiv), the date of which is still in some doubt:

On the Lord's day assemble together and break bread and celebrate the Eucharist,[3] having confessed your transgressions, in order that your sacrifice may be pure. Everyone that is at variance with his neighbour, let him not join you until they be reconciled, lest your sacrifice be defiled. For this is that sacrifice which was spoken of by the Lord: *In every place and time offer me a pure*

[1] Irenaeus lays stress on the fact that the bread and wine are of this creation because he is writing against the Gnostics; this need not here detain us.

[2] 'gave thanks': the verb is that corresponding to the noun 'Eucharist,' 'thanksgiving': see notes on p. xxvi. The verb itself has a special Eucharistic significance, as in Justin, *Apol.* I. 66, where he speaks of the 'food made *Eucharist* (or consecrated to be Eucharist) through the word of prayer that is from Him,' *i.e.*, from Christ, which Christians are taught to be 'the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh.' See also the *Didache*, chap. xiv (with the following note).

[3] 'celebrate the Eucharist,' the verb meaning originally to 'give thanks,' but here the Eucharist is clearly intended: see preceding note.

sacrifice; for I am a great king, saith the Lord, and my name is wonderful among the nations.

These passages are so clear that it does not appear worth while to reinforce them with other early passages which speak of the Eucharist as a sacrifice, but without any immediate reference to Malachy.

6. Some Difficulties.

Some other views of the Eucharistic prophecy are here briefly discussed. The various interpretations may now be found exhaustively treated in the gigantic edition of Malachy by A. von Bulmerincq (*Der Prophet Maleachi*: Vol. I, 1926: Vol. II, 1932)—all but the Catholic explanation already herein set forth.

St. Justin Martyr, as we have seen, himself refutes the rival interpretation of Malachy which he says was current among the Jews of his time; nor do his words allow us to suppose that he himself would have been content to understand Malachy of a purely metaphorical sacrifice, such as prayer. He is content to speak of Christian sacrifices as fulfilling the prophecy, without mention of prayers (p. xxvi), but not of prayers by themselves as sufficient, apart from the Eucharist (pp. xxvi, xxvii).

Upon what may be called the syncretistic view of the prophecy it will be enough to quote Prof. Powis Smith, in the *International Critical Commentary* (on Mal. i. 11: p. 31):

> The view that this statement reflects the author's conviction that the gods of the heathen were only so many different names for the one great God and that the nations were therefore in reality worshipping Yahweh (Jehovah) finds many supporters. But against this is the following statement that incense is offered to Yahweh's *name*. Moreover, the emphasis in Malachi upon ritualism and its attitude towards mixed marriages militate strongly against the hypothesis that its author could have taken so charitable and sympathetic a view of paganism.

The refutation itself is solid, though put in the author's own way. But his own suggestion can hardly be taken much

more seriously, that Malachy 'may have had such shrines as that at Elephantine in mind when he wrote' (*ibid.*, p. 32). For what is known of the shrine at Elephantine one may conveniently turn to the little volume, *Jewish Documents of the time of Ezra*, translated and edited by the late Dr. A. E. Cowley (S.P.C.K., 1919). The evidence consists of papyri belonging to the 5th century B.C., which show us a Jewish colony settled at Elephantine in the south of Egypt, which originally at all events consisted of mercenaries in the employ of the government. It possessed a temple with an altar whereon sacrifices were burnt to Yahu, who is certainly to be identified with Yahweh or Jehovah, and we find that the passover and the feast of unleavened bread were to be celebrated. In 408 B.C. the Jewish priests write to Bigvai, the governor of Judaea, that the Egyptian priests have had Yahu's temple destroyed by the governor of the colony, and they petition Bigvai to order the temple to be rebuilt; and this petition is granted. Evidently the Persian governor of Palestine possessed wide powers; but whether the temple was actually rebuilt seems doubtful.

The question is, could a Jewish prophet in Palestine anticipate or desire the multiplication of such a shrine as the temple at Elephantine? To this question a negative answer can safely be returned. Not merely were the Jews at Elephantine guilty of some idolatry, but other gods seem to have been associated in the worship of Yahu himself (*Jewish Documents, etc.*, pp. xiii—xiv); the conditions of the cult were far from being ideal, or such as the prophet would set forth in contrast as the more perfect way. Nor again can it be maintained seriously that such a temple would not offend against the centralization of worship ordered in Deuteronomy (Deut. xii. 13—14, *etc.*); indeed, if there was danger of the contamination of the worship in Palestine itself, the danger would be far greater outside Palestine, as the case of Elephantine itself shows. Whatever the Jewish colonists may have thought, or whatever their tradition may have been, there can be no doubt in regard of the attitude of a post-exilic prophet. As a matter of fact the attitude of the

Jerusalem priests was probably hostile too; all that we actually know is that they returned no answer to a petition for help (*ibid.*, no. 30, p. 73).

The only other certain example of the kind is the later temple at Leontopolis, likewise in Egypt, details of which, with the references to Josephus, can be read in Schürer's *History of the Jewish People in the time of Jesus Christ*, Engl. transl., 2nd division, vol. 2, pp. 286—8. It was founded by Onias IV, son of the high priest Onias III, when he found that he had no chance of succeeding to his father's office; his attitude towards the Jerusalem temple was hostile, but he was helped in his purpose by the then king of Egypt, Ptolemy VI Philometor. A dilapidated Egyptian temple was rebuilt and adapted, and a regular Jewish service was instituted about 160 B.C., which lasted till it was closed by the Romans in 73 A.D., after the destruction of Jerusalem and of the Temple proper. Schürer writes of it as follows:

> Of course the learned doctors of Palestine never looked upon the services of this temple as legitimate worship, nor did they recognize the sacrifices offered in it as valid except to a very limited extent. But even the Egyptian Jews themselves were not satisfied merely with the worship in their adopted country, but still kept up their connection with Jerusalem. In common with all other Jews they made pilgrimages to Jerusalem, while their priests on getting married always had their wife's pedigree authenticated in the Holy City.

Humanly speaking, of course, Malachy could not have had the Leontopolis temple in mind; but it must also be obvious how far it was in every way from fulfilling the sweeping words of his prophecy. It may be enough to point out that it was a Jewish temple, conducted by Jewish priests, and unlawful at that; moreover it was, of course, not a temple 'in every place'. In regard of this last point, however, there is a puzzling statement in Onias IV's letter to Ptolemy VI, as recorded in Josephus, *Antiquities*, xiii. 3. 1, to the effect that upon coming into Egypt he found that 'most' of the Jews there had temples, and for this reason were quarrelling among themselves; by the building of a single large temple he pro-

posed to establish concord. Such a statement so utterly lacks support elsewhere that one can only wonder whether the letter be genuine, especially as the answer ascribed to Ptolemy falls under even graver suspicion, being written from a standpoint far too Jewish. Even if the letter be genuine, it must still remain very doubtful whether Onias was telling the truth. Possibly for his own purposes he was calling the synagogues 'temples'. The supposition that he found many Jewish temples in Egypt is so unlikely that it is not worth while to insist at length that even so we could not assume them to be more than two centuries old, and that in any case, they would not satisfy the terms of the prophecy.

Finally, it seems right to mention also an objection made by Père Lagrange, O.P., in the *Revue Biblique* for 1906, in *Notes sur les prophéties messianiques des derniers prophètes*. It may be enough to translate two sentences (p. 81):

> The veil of the future was not completely lifted for him, and we do not maintain that he saw with his eyes the offering of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. He is still thinking of the levites, but of the levites as purified (iii. 3), of a sacrifice offered in the name of Yahweh (Jehovah), known as such.

Now it is not of course necessary that a prophet should know *all* in regard of the subject of his prophecy; the Old Testament prophets prophesied, as God spoke to them, 'in many parts and in many ways' (Hebr. i. 1). Hence Malachy need not have known *all* about the sacrifice of the Mass, but it was enough that he should know what he was commissioned to declare. What he was thus commissioned to declare in i. 10—14, however, is not inconsistent with the picture of restoration in iii. 1—4. The simplest and most literal interpretation of the latter passage appears to be the best, and it will be enough to set it forth here.

In the first place, then, it seems best to distinguish in iii. 1 'my messenger' and 'the messenger of the covenant'. The former is merely to 'prepare the way before me', but the latter is 'the Lord, whom ye are seeking', who is to accomplish a complete work of reformation, in the description of which, after the manner of Old Testament prophecy, the

significance of the text is vastly increased, inasmuch as there is a transition to the first person singular, even while the reform itself is still being described.

'My messenger' in iii. 1 would thus be St. John the Baptist, to whom the title is referred in Matt. xi. 10: Mark i. 2 (where the predominant quotation is from Isaiah): Luke i. 76: vii. 27. But 'the messenger of the covenant' is Christ Himself, for whom the Baptist prepared the way, and who in the sequel is at least implicitly identified with Jehovah Himself; and so the passage appears to be understood in Luke i. 76, for the Baptist is said to be about to 'go before the Lord to prepare his ways', which is evidently what he did for Christ. Such an identification of 'the messenger of the covenant' with Jehovah need not have been clear to the Old Testament Hebrews; but we see the full bearing of the words more easily after the event. To identify 'the messenger of the covenant' with 'my messenger' is to rob the intervening words about the coming of the Lord Himself of all significance.

During the ministry of Christ, then, and for some time afterwards, when 'a great multitude of the priests submitted to the faith' (Acts vi. 7: *cf.* John xii. 42), who would doubtless continue to minister in the Temple (*cf.* Acts ii. 46: xxi. 23—26: *etc.*), we may well suppose that the oblations of Judah and Jerusalem were offered in justness, so as to be pleasing to Jehovah (iii. 3—4). The absolute fulfilment of this prophecy, therefore, is not inconsistent with the absolute fulfilment of that in i. 10—11. At the same time we may well suppose that there was something far greater yet possible for Jerusalem and the Temple, which yet was subject to a condition: *cf.* Deut. xxviii—xxx: Luke xix. 42—44: *etc.* Such a condition is clearly implied in Mal. iii. 10, and may reasonably be held to affect the whole of that section. But it may also be that the far greater blessing will yet come in another form, upon the Jews' entry into the Church of God, prophesied by St. Paul (Rom. xi. 25—32); and that the rejection of the Old Testament sacrifices in i. 10 will be found not to hinder a final and rich fulfilment of iii. 3—4, because

the oblation of Judah and Jerusalem will itself also be that pure oblation, so well pleasing unto Jehovah, which is offered from the rising of the sun even unto the setting thereof. 'For God hath imprisoned all alike in disobedience, in order that he may have mercy on all' (Rom. xi. 32).

In that case we may possibly presume a certain "compenetration' in iii. 1—6 between the first and second coming of Christ, such as is also set forth as a possible hypothesis in the note on Mark xiii. 4, and was well explained in principle by the late Father R. Hull, S.J., in his article on 'Compenetration in Prophecy' in the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* for December, 1922 (5th series, vol. 20, pp. 594—601).[1] The present writer has also treated of it in a paper on Old Testament prophecy read before the Society for Old Testament Study (*Catholic Gazette*, March and April, 1932) and elsewhere. There may be seen a certain unity in the divine plan between the first and second coming, which would find expression in a certain unity of treatment; and we have independent grounds in the New Testament[2] for affirming 'compenetration' between St. John the Baptist and Elias, the herald of the first coming and the herald of the second. Thus the prophecy assumes a vaster significance, and is seen to contain within itself the greater issues of the history of the world.

[1] Now included in *Medieval Theories of the Papacy and other essays*, by the late Rev. R. Hull, S.J., M.A.Oxon., edited by the Rev. E. F. Sutcliffe, S.J., M.A.Oxon. (Burns, Oates and Washbourne: 7s. 6d.)

[2] Matt. xi. 14: xvii. 10—13: Mark ix. 11—13: Luke i. 17: *cf.* Matt. xvi. 14: Mark vi. 15: viii. 28: Luke ix. 8, 19: John i. 21. On the Jewish tradition regarding Elias as the forerunner of the Messiah see (*e.g.*) Schürer's *History of the Jewish People*, Engl. transl., div. 2, vol 2, pp. 156—8.

SUMMARY OF TEXT

A. INTRODUCTION. (Chap. I. 1—5.)

B. REBUKE. (cc. I. 6—II. 16.)

i. To the Priests. (cc. I. 6—II. 9.)

ii. To the People. (Chap. II. 10—16.)

C. THE DAY OF JEHOVAH. (cc. II. 17—IV.)

i. The Worship of Jehovah. (cc. II. 17—III. 12.)

ii. Jehovah's righteous judgment. (cc. III. 13—IV.)

MALACHY

A

Introduction. (Chap. I. 1—5.)

I.

'I have loved Jacob and hated Esau' The oracle of Jehovah's word to Israel 1
through Malachy.

I have loved you, saith Jehovah; 2
Yet ye say, 'Wherein hast thou loved us?'
Is not Esau brother to Jacob? saith Jehovah;
Yet have I loved Jacob and hated Esau, 3

I. 1—5. *Introduction:* '*I have loved Jacob and hated Esau.*' The prophecy, which is to contain much strong rebuke and even implied rejection, opens with a protestation of Jehovah's love for Israel, enforced by the contrast with His attitude towards Edom.

1. 'oracle,' *lit.*, 'the lifting up,' *i.e.*, of the voice, in a more solemn manner. 'Malachy': *cf.* Introd., chap. 1.

2—3. Here and in i. 6—7 we have typical examples of the element of dialogue in the prophecy: *cf.* Introd., p. xv. The 'hatred' or 'indignation' (i. 4) here spoken of are those wherewith Jehovah regarded 'all workers of iniquity' (Ps. v. 5 [7]). 'Esau' and 'Edom' are one and the same (Gen. xxxvi. 1, 8, 19: *etc.*). Hebrew thought identified up to a certain point ancestor and descendants, as is seen for example in the manner of speaking about the twelve patriarchs and the tribes sprung from them. As in the case of Adam (which word itself means 'man'), but in a different way, the sin and punishment of Esau was perpetuated in his descendants: *cf.* Isai. xxxiv. 5—6: lxiii. 1—6: Ps. cxxxvii (cxxxvi). 7: Hebr. xii. 16—17: *etc.*

2. 'I have loved you,' implying a love still effective both in temporal and spiritual blessings.

3. quoted Rom. ix. 13. 'a wilderness for jackals': this appears to be the best translation of the text as it stands, though the order of the words is a little unusual. Others would render, 'and his heritage I have given over to the jackals of the wilderness'; but the Hebrew word for 'I have given over' is not in the text, and its absence makes grammar and sense rather difficult. By a small change of the Hebrew, which is suggested by some of the versions, one could translate, 'and his heritage pastures in the

And his mountains I have made desolate,
And his heritage a wilderness for jackals.
4 Whereas Edom saith, 'We have been beaten down,
But we will rebuild the ruins',
Thus saith Jehovah of hosts:
They may build, but I will overthrow,
And they shall be called the Land of Wickedness,
And the people whereat Jehovah is indignant for ever.

wilderness.' Even this sense of 'pastures,' however, is not quite satisfactory, and a somewhat greater change is suggested, 'his heritage I have made a wilderness.'

This verse may be a description of the natural state of Edom, but more probably it alludes to the same calamity as the next verse. Edom as territory lay to the south and south-east of Judah, embracing the ranges on both sides of the depression which runs south from the Dead Sea to the head of the Gulf of Akabah.

4. 'we have been beaten down.' This clearly alludes to some recent historical event, probably connected with the encroachments of the Nabataean Arabs, who were pressing in from the south and dislodging the Edomites from their fastnesses. The details of this gradual overrunning are unknown to us, as are likewise the attempts of Edom to restore the damage done, and the nature of the divine interference.

'Jehovah of hosts,' a common title for God in the prophets, and especially in Malachy, where 'saith Jehovah of hosts' is almost a refrain running through the book, and indeed is found now in lines where the versification makes us suspect that it was originally absent (*e.g.*, i. 8—9). The original form was perhaps 'Jehovah, the God of hosts,' as in Amos (*e.g.*, Amos iv. 13) and elsewhere. The hosts of heaven appear to be meant.

Neither the sin nor the divine wrath are to cease; the latter is to be a token of Jehovah's might (i. 5). The part that Edom played in the earlier destruction of Jerusalem is referred to in Ps. cxxxvii (cxxxvi). 7, and elsewhere, and the Idumaeans also fought against the Jews, but unsuccessfully, in the Maccabaean revolt (I Mac. v. 3: II Mac. x. 14-23: about 163 B.C.). In the revolt of 66—70 A.D. they came to Jerusalem when summoned by the Zealots, and joined them in massacre (Josephus, *Jewish War*, iv. 5), and afterwards tried to make a separate surrender (*ibid.*, vi. 8); their share in the revolt presents a somewhat complicated story, but was a misfortune for the Jews. After the destruction of Jerusalem they practically disappear from history. The Herods, however, were of Idumaean descent (*ibid.*, i. 6: *etc.*), a fact which told against them with the Jews.

Your eyes shall see, and yourselves shall say, 5
'Jehovah is great, even beyond the border of Israel!'

B

Rebuke. (cc. I. 6—II. 16.)

I. To the Priests. (cc. I. 6—II. 9.)

The sacrifices scamped

Son honoureth father, 6
And a servant his lord:
If then I be father,
Where is mine honour?
And if I be lord,
Where is my fear?
Saith Jehovah of hosts to you, O priests,
That despise my name.
Yet ye say,
'Wherein have we despised thy name?'
Ye offer defiled food 7
Upon mine altar.

5. 'even beyond.' 'even' is not in the Hebrew, but helps to bring out the sense. Some render 'above,' *i.e.*, Jehovah shows His might *over* the land of Israel by protecting it; this is the usual meaning of the Hebrew, but the translation adopted seems to be quite possible, and to suit the context far better.

6—14. *The sacrifices scamped.* The prophet comes at once to his main theme, carelessness and contempt in the Temple liturgy; and in the course of his protests he prophesies the rejection of the Jewish worship, and the offering 'in every place' of 'a pure oblation' (i. 11). This prophecy has been treated at length in the Introduction, and nothing further will be said of it here. A spirit of weariness and routine is rebuked: *cf.* Introd., p. xvi.

6. 'a servant' in general, slave or free. 'priests': *cf.* Introd., p. xviii.

7. 'defiled food,' as explained in i. 8. 'have we defiled thee,' or with the Septuagint and Targum, 'defiled it'; but such vigorous phrasing, somewhat typical of the prophet, would far more easily be changed than invented. See also i. 13, with note. 'ye say,' probably in the sense of 'say to yourselves,' as often: *e.g.*, Exod. ii. 14. 'The table of Jehovah': *cf.* i. 12: I Cor. x. 21: Introd., pp. xxiv—xxv.

Yet ye say,
'Wherein have we defiled thee?'
In that ye say,
'The table of Jehovah is contemptible'.
8 When ye offer blind victims for sacrifice,
It is no evil!
And when ye offer lame or sick,
It is no evil!
Present them, prithee, to thy governor:
Will he be pleased therewith,
Or will he have regard to thee?
Saith Jehovah of hosts.
9 And now, prithee, appease God,
That he be gracious unto us.
This hath been your doing;
Will he have regard to any of you?
Saith Jehovah of hosts.
10 Nay, would there were among you
One that would close the gates,

8. In general it was unlawful to sacrifice victims with any blemish: *cf.* Levit. xxii. 17—25: Deut. xv. 21: xvii. 1: *etc.* 'It is no evil!' Or possibly as a plain statement, giving their thoughts, 'It is no evil.' Or it may be a rhetorical question; the general sense in any case remains the same. 'governor': *cf.* Introd., pp. xvi, xviii. 'have regard to thee,' *lit.*, 'lift up thy face.' The complaint of this verse is repeated in i. 13—14.

9. 'Saith Jehovah of hosts.' It seems likely that these words should be omitted; they do not seem to fit easily into the poetry, and it is rather odd to have God using 'saith' of Himself in this way. See notes on i. 4: ii. 7.

10. Better no sacrifices at all than such defiled worship! In fact, there *will* be no sacrifices; God will bring the present worship to an end. The Temple has been rebuilt: *cf.* Introd., pp. xvi, xxiii. 'neither will I accept': the reference in the Hebrew is clearly to future time, and from this verb the time envisaged in i. 11 is also seen to be the future: *cf.* Introd., p. xxii. 'the gates.' It is not clear whether the gates of the whole sacred enclosure be meant, or of the inner courts, or of the innermost court of all; this last seems most likely, since there is question of shutting out the priests from the altar of burnt-offering.

That ye might not kindle fire
Upon mine altar in vain!
I take no pleasure in you,
Saith Jehovah of hosts,
Neither will I accept an offering
At your hand.
For from the rising of the sun 11
Even unto the setting thereof
My name shall be great among the gentiles,
And in every place
There shall be sacrifice, there shall be offering
Unto my name, even a pure oblation;
For my name shall be great among the gentiles,
Saith Jehovah of hosts.
But ye profane it, in that ye say, 12
'The table of the Lord is defiled,
And the fruit thereof, even his food, is contemptible',
And ye say, 'Behold, what a weariness!' 13
And ye have sneered at me,

11. This verse is discussed at length in the Introduction.

12. 'the table of the Lord'; *cf.* Introd., pp. xxiv—xxv: I Cor. x. 21. 'defiled', the same word as in i. 7, but a little strange here; it appears best to take it with Hoonacker (*ad loc.*) as meaning that the priests are behaving as if Jehovah's altar were defiled, they look upon it as if it were defiled (*cf.* i. 7). This sense is all the easier because the verb 'say' is often used in Hebrew for 'think,' or as we might put it, 'say to oneself.' 'the fruit thereof.' This would refer to the share of the priests in the sacrifices; but the expression is strange, and the word is questionable in itself, and in this place is so like the word following that it may have arisen from it, in which case we should simply translate, 'and his food is contemptible.' This would still refer to the food offered in sacrifice, but would mean that it was not worth trouble for *any* reason.

13—14. The complaint of i. 8 (where see note) is repeated.

13. The 'weariness' may refer in part to the duty of eating of the sacrifices, especially in the Temple: see (*e.g.*) Levit. x. 12—20. 'sneered (lit. sniffed) at me.' The massoretic reading is, 'at it,' but this is noted

Saith Jehovah of hosts.
And ye have brought victims torn and lame and
sick,
Of such ye have brought mine offering:
Shall I accept it at your hand?
Saith Jehovah of hosts.
14 Nay, cursed be the cheat
That hath in his flock a male,
And voweth, and sacrificeth thereupon
To the Lord a blemished victim;
For I am a great king,
Saith Jehovah of hosts,
And my name shall be terrible
Among the gentiles.

to have been 'a correction of the scribes,' made in reverence of Jehovah, so that the Jewish tradition really stood for the text, which is also better supported by other authorities. The language is no less vigorous in i. 7, where see note. 'torn.' The Hebrew word means this either directly (Hoonacker) or by implication, the victim having been 'torn away' from beasts and therefore already mangled; it would not be lawful even for ordinary food (*cf.* Exod. xxii. 31: Levit. xvii. 15). 'victims' is not in the Hebrew, but is added for clearness. 'offering': *cf.* Introd., p. xxii. 'of hosts': not in the massoretic text, but doubtless to be inserted from the Septuagint and Peshitta: *cf.* i. 4, note.

14. The prophet appears to be extending his rebuke from the public sacrifices of the priests in i. 13 to the private sacrifices of the laity, for which however the priests would be partly responsible as superintending and making the actual offering; such a fault as that here rebuked, required connivance on their part, or at least neglect. 'a male.' The 'male without blemish' was the sacrifice *par excellence* (Levit. i. 3, 10, *etc.*) and is so clearly intended here that it seems unnecessary to suppose a word lost. Hence there is no need to understand 'a blemished victim' (*lit.* 'a blemished thing') as *female*, with a change of the pointing. As a matter of fact female victims were allowed in peace-offerings (Levit. iii. 1) and required for some sin-offerings (Levit. iv. 28, 32: v. 6). 'shall be terrible.' In itself the Hebrew is indifferent to time, which is inferred from what precedes: *cf.* Introd., p. xxii.

II.

And now for you 1
Threats Is this command, O priests:
If ye will not hear, 2
And if ye will not lay it to heart,
So as to give glory to my name,
Saith Jehovah of hosts:
Then will I send the curse upon you,
And I will turn your blessing into a curse,
Nay, I have already turned it into a curse,
Because ye are not laying it to heart.
Behold, I will rebuke your arm, 3
And I will spread dung upon your faces,

II. 1—9. *Threats.* The main threat is that of a curse, even already to some extent pronounced (ii. 2), mainly because many have been caused to stumble, and the covenant of Levi has been broken (ii. 8). A commendation is given of Levi in the past (ii. 5—6), probably to be understood in a very general sense of the whole history of the tribe. There is no need to suppose that the author understands all levites to be priests, for a prophet so interested in the Temple liturgy was not likely to omit entirely the levites as such, who doubtless figured largely therein, though in a subordinate position. See also Introd., p. xviii. The threats include the public contempt and shame of ii. 9, which probably are not to be understood as already inflicted.

1. 'this command,' implied rather than expressed, to reform the abuses indicated, under threat of penalties likewise indicated.

2. The conditional threat ('if ye will not hear') is quickly turned to an absolute statement ('Nay, I have already turned it'), because God reads their heart, and their successors' likewise. 'the curse,' said to be upon the whole people in iii. 9. The definite article is perhaps used with thought of Deut. xxvii. 26: xxviii. 15. 'your blessing.' The massoretic text has 'blessings,' but the singular is practically presupposed in the next line ('it') and is supported by the Septuagint. 'I will turn your blessing into a curse,' *lit.*, 'I will curse your blessing,' which is best explained thus (*cf.* ii. 3, with note); the reverse of this action is indicated in Deut. xxiii. 5: Neh. xiii. 2.

3. 'arm,' with the Septuagint and Vulgate and Aquila; the massoretic reading is 'seed,' which is difficult to explain. The 'rebuking' of the arm means making it of none effect (*cf.* iii. 11: Isai. liv. 9: *etc.*) by turning the priestly blessing into a curse (*cf.* ii. 2, with note). 'dung,'

Even the dung of your feast-days,
And yourselves shall be removed therewith.
4 And ye shall know that unto you
I have sent this command,
That it may be my covenant with Levi,
Saith Jehovah of hosts.
5 My covenant was with him: even of life and peace,
And I gave them to him:
Of fear, and he did fear me,
And he stood in awe of my name.
6 The law of truth was in his mouth,

probably the faecal matter in the intestines of the victims, which was to be burned with fire 'outside the camp' (Exod. xxix. 14, *etc.*); the priests would be carried away in the fetid heap. 'Yourselves shall be removed.' The Hebrew has the third person singular indefinite active (as in French with *on* or in German with *man*); but perhaps we should read, 'I will remove you,' with the Septuagint and Peshitta. As sometimes happens in Holy Writ, repulsive language is used to show how loathsome is the conduct that provokes it; the metaphor brings out the vehemence of Jehovah's displeasure.

4. 'this command,' *i.e.*, that of ii. 1, where see note. 'That it may be my covenant with Levi.' The sense is difficult and disputed. The translation follows Hoonacker's, but the meaning seems rather to be that the execution of the threats will *be* the covenant with Levi, in the sense that it will be the punishment foretold (*e.g.*, in Deut. xxvii—xxviii: *cf.* ii. 2, note) for their having broken it (ii. 8), and in this sense its embodiment. The covenant itself is summarized in ii. 5—6. 'Levi,' according to a common O.T. usage, is used for the descendants of Levi as a body.

5. 'My covenant' consisted on the one side of 'life and peace,' given by Jehovah to Levi, and on the other side of 'fear,' rendered by Levi to Jehovah; not of course a panic fear, but the true 'fear of Jehovah' so often inculcated in the Old Testament, and a cause of holy joy: see Ps. ii. 11: cxii (cxi). 1: *etc.* The reference in ii. 5—6 is a general one, without notice being taken of occasional abuses; and similarly in iii. 4, which however is soon qualified by iii. 7 (where see note).

6. 'the law of truth was in his mouth.' This is explained by the negative parallel in the next line; the immediate reference is not to the Mosaic Law as such (although it would be involved as the code to be observed), but rather in general to just decisions upon points brought before the priests (*cf.* Deut. xvii. 8—13: xix. 17: *etc.*). In ii. 3 the

And injustice was not found upon his lips;
In peace and uprightness he walked with me,
And many he brought back from iniquity.
For the priest's lips should be guardians of know- 7
ledge,
And they should seek the Law at his mouth;
For he is the messenger of Jehovah of hosts.
But ye have turned aside from the way, 8
Ye have caused many to stumble at the Law,
Ye have broken the covenant of Levi,
Saith Jehovah of hosts;
And I therefore shall bring upon you 9
Contempt and shame before all the people,
Inasmuch as ye are not keeping my ways,
But have respect to persons in administering the
Law.

mention of 'feast-days' shows that the main complaint is still liturgical, but in ii. 6—9 it passes to administrative and judicial action, no doubt largely in connection with the liturgy.

7. It is evident from the preceding verse that a wide scope must be allowed to the term 'knowledge,' which yet centres about the 'Law.' The priesthood of the Old Testament was mainly concerned with the liturgy, and the practical instruction of the people belonged chiefly to the prophets and later to the scribes. This is one reason (in itself indecisive) why the third line of the verse presents a difficulty; 'the messenger of Jehovah' is elsewhere usually an angel (*e.g.*, Gen. xvi. 7—11) or a prophet (as in iii. 1: Hagg. i. 13), the only passage where he is probably a priest being Ecclus. v. 5. Besides this, the reference to Jehovah in the third person when Jehovah is speaking is awkward (*cf.* i. 9, note), and the line (as can be seen sufficiently from the translation) appears to be redundant to the verse-system. Probably it should be omitted with Hoonacker.

8. 'at the Law,' or perhaps 'in the Law,' regarded from the preceding line as 'the way.'

9. 'shall bring': probably the 'prophetic perfect': *cf.* Driver, *Hebrew Tenses*, ed. 3, sect. 14. Such would be the natural effect of i. 10: ii. 2—3.

II. To the People. (Chap. II. 10—16.)

10 Have we not all one father?
Heathen marriages Hath not one God created us?
Why do we deal treacherously every man with his brother,
Profaning the covenant of our fathers?
11 Judah hath dealt treacherously,
And abomination hath been wrought in Israel and Jerusalem.
For Judah hath profaned the sanctuary

10—12. *Heathen marriages.* In the Introduction (p. xvii) it has already been noted that Malachy's attack upon heathen marriages finds a striking echo in Neh. xiii. 23—31 (referring to some time after 433 B.C.: *cf.* Neh. xiii. 6): Neh. x. 28—30 (referring to 444 B.C. or thereabouts): Ezra ix—x (458–7 B.C.). Malachy's prophecy appears to precede the events of this last passage by a few years. Heathen marriages are prohibited in Exod. xxxiv. 16: Deut. vii. 3, in both places by reason of the danger of idolatry. It is clear from Ezra and Nehemiah that such marriages were at this time a peculiar peril to the religion and national unity of the Jews, owing to their small numbers.

10. 'one father,' *i.e.*, God, as is clear from the parallel verse which follows. 'created us.' There is an implicit appeal to all else that has ensued in the mutual relations of Jehovah and Israel. 'deal treacherously,' primarily (it would seem) in forsaking the national religion and unity, as in ii. 11. If the reference were directly to divorce, one would rather expect mention of the wife, as in ii. 14, where the verb is yet again used. 'profaning the covenant.' Such a strong expression, joined to others in the next verse, and considered in the light of Ezra and Nehemiah (especially Ezra ix. 1), shows that idolatry was not merely a danger, but had actually resulted to some extent from the heathen marriages.

11. 'dealt treacherously.' Idolatry is often represented as adultery in the Old Testament, *e.g.*, in Hosea (Osee), partly because of the rites of prostitution in other religions; here accordingly there is an implication that marriage to pagans has meant unfaithfulness to wedlock with Jehovah. And so indeed it was apt to prove in actual fact: see notes on ii. 10—12, 10. This double sense of idolatry and unhallowed wedlock is also present in the words 'abomination' and 'profaned the sanctuary'; which latter perhaps signifies the practice of idolatry within the Temple area itself, as in II (IV) Kings xxi. 4—5. 'the daughter of a strange god,' just as the Hebrews were the sons and daughters of Jehovah (Deut. xxxii. 19).

Of Jehovah, which he loveth,
And hath married the daughter of a strange god;
May Jehovah cut off for the man that doth this 12
Him that waketh and him that answereth
From the tents of Jacob,
And him that offereth an oblation
To Jehovah of hosts.

And this again ye do: ye cover 13
Divorce Jehovah's altar
With tears, with weeping and with groaning
So that he no more regardeth the oblation,
Nor receiveth it at your hand with favour.

12. The prayer seems to be for the destruction of the kith and kin of the offender, and of all that are in any way associated with him; his own destruction is no doubt implied, but it is not explicitly included. The phrase 'him that waketh and him that answereth' offers a difficulty, and some wish to alter the text; but it appears to be best explained as a figure from camp-life, of sentries or watchmen giving the challenge upon their rounds and receiving the watchword in reply. May the whole camp of such a man perish! Such a prayer chiefly aims at the safeguarding of the national religion and life by the 'cutting off' of corrupting influences, and presupposes that the sinner will not mend his ways. It were better that none from his circle should offer an oblation at all. A propitiatory sacrifice does not seem to be intended. 'oblation' is used in a general sense, both here and in the next verse: *cf.* Introd., p. xxii.

13—16. *Divorce.* This section is complementary to the preceding; the Hebrew wife was forsaken for the idolatrous foreigner. Polygamy was practised by the Jews in Old and New Testament times and after; but monogamy was more common, and the new wife would try to oust the old.

13. The sense might be, '*because* he no more regardeth'; but such a portrayal of concern at Jehovah's disfavour is little in keeping with the previous complaints of neglect and carelessness in divine worship, and it is more likely that the tears are those of the divorced Hebrew wives. In any case the covering of the altar with tears must be understood metaphorically, as the laity would not be permitted to approach it. 'with weeping and with groaning': these words are awkwardly placed for grammar and versification in the Hebrew, and should perhaps be omitted.

14 Yet ye say, 'Why is this?'
Because Jehovah is witness
Between thee and the wife of thy youth,
Against whom thou hast dealt treacherously,
Although she is thy consort
And thy covenanted wife.
15 Hath he not made them one
In flesh and life?
And why thus one?
Because he seeketh a seed divine!
Therefore take heed to your lives,
And deal not treacherously
Against the wife of thy youth.
16 For he that putteth away with hatred,

14. 'the wife of thy youth': again in ii. 15. It was a part of the general laxity in matters religious (*cf.* Introd., chap. 2) that heathen wives were being taken in place of the Hebrew wives, who would probably have been married (in accordance with Jewish custom) when both parties were still in their teens. 'dealt treacherously,' the same word as in ii. 10—11, where see notes. 'thy covenanted wife,' *lit.*, 'the wife of thy covenant,' the covenant being the marriage contract.

15. 'This is unquestionably the most difficult verse in Malachy' (Powis Smith, *ad loc*). The interpretation is in the main that of Hoonacker, who changes two letters in the first line, the one to make a question (parallel to that in the third line), and the other to produce the suffix for 'them.' The reference will be to the union of man and wife, as indicated in Gen. ii. 24; the purpose of which union is (literally) 'a seed of God,' *i.e.*, especially chosen by God. Hoonacker puts the Hebrew participle into the third line, without serious difference in the sense: 'what is this one being seeking? A seed divine!' That is to say, what is the purpose of this 'one' being thus established by God? 'to your lives,' *i.e.*, to that one life which husband and wife make up together, as in lines 1—2. The last two lines repeat in part the preceding verse, and are practically repeated in the next verse.

16. The 1st and 3rd lines of this verse are also difficult. They are here translated as they stand, except for a slight change of pointing in the first line, and the omission of a preposition in the third. The massoretic text seems best translated, 'him that covereth his garment with violence'; but such a figure does not occur elsewhere in the Old Testament, and does not make easy sense. The garment is more naturally taken to be that

Saith Jehovah, the God of Israel,
Doth violence in covering with the garment,
Saith Jehovah of hosts;
Therefore take heed to your lives,
And deal not treacherously.

C

The Day of Jehovah. (cc. II. 17—IV.)

I. The Worship of Jehovah. (cc. II. 17—III. 12.)

The messenger of the covenant

Ye have wearied Jehovah with your words; 17
Yet ye say, 'Wherein have we wearied him?'

with which one covers, not that which is covered; and the change involved is only the omission of the preposition. The reference is doubtless to the ancient custom whereby to cast the garment over a woman was to claim or take her as wife: *cf.* Deut. xxii. 30 (xxiii. 1): Ruth iii. 9: Ezek. xvi. 8. Here the taking of the new wife meant a violent wrong towards the former Hebrew wife. With the addition of two letters in the first line the text might translate, 'For I hate divorce . . . and him that doth violence in covering with the garment'; but there does not appear to be sufficient reason for the change. Upon the subject of divorce Our Lord said that 'because of your stubbornness of heart Moses *permitted* you to put away your wives; but it was not so from the beginning' (Matt. xix. 8). This is borne out by Deut. xxiv. 1—4, which presupposes divorce as an already existing practice, but puts a check upon it: see (*e.g.*) Driver's note on the passage in the *International Critical Commentary*, and the Westminster Version on Matt. xix. 8.

II. 17—III. 6. *The messenger of the covenant.* The interpretation of these verses is treated at some length in the Introduction, pp. xxxii—xxxiv. They do not contradict the main eucharistic prophecy of i. 11, but supplement it. The complaint is that Jehovah favours evil-doers, that He shows no justice; there is reference not only to the rulers and nations that had prevailed against Israel, but also to the evil-doers within Israel itself, mentioned in this section and the two preceding (*cf.* Neh. v). It is a cry of disappointment and despair, met by Jehovah in part by the encouragement of messianic hope, but also by rebukes which make the section far severer than iii. 13—21.

17. 'Ye have wearied Jehovah': similarly Isai. xliii. 24. 'Else.' These words seem to be part of the complaint; if the preceding part of

In that ye say, 'Everyone that doth evil
Is good in Jehovah's eyes,
And it is in such that he taketh pleasure;
Else where is the God of justice?'

III.

1 Behold, I am sending my messenger,
And he shall prepare the way before me,
And suddenly there shall come to his temple
The Lord, whom ye are seeking,
Even the messenger of the covenant,
In whom is your pleasure.
Behold, he cometh,
Saith Jehovah of hosts;
2 But who shall endure the day of his coming?
And who shall stand when he appears?
For he shall be like a refiner's fire,
And like fuller's soap,
3 And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver,

it be not true, then why does not God show his justice and punish the wicked?

III. 1. 'my messenger' appears to be St. John the Baptist, and distinct from 'the Lord, the messenger of the covenant,' who is Christ Himself: *cf.* Introd., pp. xxxii—xxxiii, with the New Testament references. 'prepare the way': *cf.* Isai. xl. 3, which is linked with these words in Mark i. 2—3. 'whom ye are seeking . . in whom is your pleasure': the words refer back, not without irony, to the preceding question, 'where is the God of justice?' The next verse shows that the coming may not be altogether pleasant: *cf.* Amos v. 18. It appears to be essentially the same coming as the 'drawing nigh' of iii. 5 (although this is not explicitly stated) and 'his temple' is the scene of iii. 3—4. 'the messenger of the covenant,' probably as bringing the new covenant, but only as the full development of 'the covenant' already existing; this appears from what follows, and is not really contradicted by i. 10—11 (*cf.* Introd., pp. xxxii—xxxiv). Other references to this verse are to be found in ii. 7, note: Introd., pp. xv, xvi, xxii, xxxii, xxxiv.

2. 'who shall stand': *cf.* Apoc. vi. 17. 'refiner's fire': the simile is developed in the next verse.

3. 'Jehovah shall have them that offer.' The prophecy seems to have been fulfilled literally during the ministry of Christ and His apostles,

And he shall purify the sons of Levi,
And he shall purge them
Like gold and silver,
And Jehovah shall have them that offer
Oblations in justness.
Then shall the oblation of Judah and Jerusalem 4
Be pleasing unto Jehovah,
As in the days of yore,
And as in ancient years.
And I will draw nigh unto you for judgment, 5
And I will be a swift witness
Against the sorcerers and against the adulterers,
And against them that swear falsely,
And that oppress the hireling in his hire,
Or the widow and the fatherless,
And that thrust aside the stranger,
And that fear me not,
Saith Jehovah of hosts.
For I, Jehovah, have not changed; 6
Therefore ye, O sons of Jacob, have not perished.

though probably with some element of condition and compenetration: *cf.* Introd., pp. xxxiii—xxxiv. 'Judgment' must 'begin from the house of God' (I Pet. iv. 17), where the main offence has been committed (i. 6—14). There are references to this verse in Introd., pp. xviii, xxii, xxxii.

4. 'as in the days of yore': *cf.* ii. 5, with note.

5. 'swift' in the sense of sudden and unexpected: 'a witness,' and at the same time a judge, exposing their wickedness by his words, and also (it may be meant) by his deeds. Although the 'drawing nigh' is that of Christ, the inspired prophet for greater effect takes for examples rather the sins of his own time: *cf.* Matt. xxiii. 'adulterers,' probably in the main with reference to marriage with pagan wives, involving also a danger of 'adultery' in the spiritual sense: *cf.* ii. 10—16, with notes. 'the stranger,' the *ger*, the foreign dweller in Israel, who might be 'thrust' out of his rights by the Hebrew.

6. 'have not perished.' Several other translations have been proposed, even (Powis Smith, *etc.*) to leaving out the 'not'; but the Hebrew

7 From the days of your fathers ye have
Tithes turned aside
From my statutes, and ye have not kept
them.
Return unto me, and I will return unto you,
Saith Jehovah of hosts.
Yet ye say, 'Wherein shall we return?'
8 Is a man to rob God?
But ye are robbing me.
Yet ye say, 'Wherein have we robbed thee?'

gives good sense as it stands, the meaning 'perished' being found in Isai. i. 28, *etc.*, and the connection being that 'the gifts and the call of God are without repentance' (Rom. xi. 29). Mindful of His promises, He has not abandoned Israel to its fate, but the visitation which He purposes will be intended as a saving grace (iii. 3—4). *Cf.* Ps. lxxxix. 28—37 (lxxxviii. 29—38).

7—12. *Tithes.* Malachy is the liturgical prophet, 'possessed with an especial zeal for the seemly worship of God' (Introd., p. xv). He now comes to speak of the tithes and other priestly dues, without which the Temple services could not worthily be maintained. The contact with the book of Nehemiah is evident: *cf.* Introd., p. xvii. Temporal blessings are promised in return for faithfulness, as usually in the Old Testament: *cf.* II Chron. (Paral.) xxxi. 10: Deut. xxviii: Haggai (Aggeus) i. 1—11, *etc.* This does not of course imply any obscuring of the moral and religious issue, as is clear throughout this prophecy itself, where the main emphasis remains always upon the honour due to Jehovah in itself.

7. The reproach in the first two lines is addressed to the people at large: *cf.* II (IV) Kings xvii. 13—23: *etc.* In this way it is not opposed to the picture of the more perfect and acceptable service of bygone years, for which the tribe of Levi would alone be responsible, found in ii. 5 (where see note): iii. 4. The third line refers in the main to outward acts both on the side of the Jews and of God. Theologically the Catholic doctrine is that an inward return would itself require God's grace; but the prophet is not dealing with such issues. The supposed protests interjected here and in the next verse, and leading to the specifying of the exact complaint, are characteristic of the prophet's style: *cf.* Introd., p. xv.

8. From iii. 10 it is clear that the main reference, at all events, is to the tithe ordered in Num. xviii. 21—32. The 'offering' here refers in the main to the priest's dues in the sacrifices, especially the thigh: see (*e.g.*) Levit. vii. 32—34.

In the tithe and offering.
Ye are cursed with the curse, 9
For it is I whom yourselves are robbing,
Even this whole nation.
Bring ye the whole tithe into the storehouse, 10
That there may be food in my house,
And try me now herein,
Saith Jehovah of hosts,
Whether I open not for you
The sluices of the heavens,
And pour you out a blessing
Till there be naught enough to hold it.
And I will rebuke for you the devourer, 11
So that he destroy not the fruit of your land,
Neither shall your vine in the field miscarry,
Saith Jehovah of hosts.
And all the nations shall call you blessed, 12
For ye shall be a land of delight,
Saith Jehovah of hosts.

9. 'the curse,' already spoken of in ii. 2, where see note: here also the definite article is used. In the rest of the section Jehovah offers to turn 'the curse' into 'a blessing' (iii. 10) if they return unto Him (*cf.* iii. 7). In the matter of tithes and offerings the 'whole nation' is clearly robbing God, and not merely the priests, who however were more directly responsible for the sacrifices (*cf.* i. 7—8, 14).

10. 'the storehouse' is probably that of Neh. x. 39 (38): xii. 44 (43): xiii. 4—13: *cf.* I (III) Kings vi. 5—6: II Chron. (Paral.) xxxi. 11—12. 'food in my house,' *i.e.*, for the priests and levites: *cf.* Num. xviii. 21—32, quoted under iii. 8. 'herein,' *i.e.*, in what follows. A condition is implied, which it is for the Jews to fulfil: *cf.* Introd., p. xxxiii. 'the sluices of the heavens,' as in Gen. vii. 11: viii. 2. 'a blessing,' evidently of a material kind, from what follows: *cf.* iii. 9, note. The precise translation of the last line is uncertain, but the general sense is clear.

11. 'rebuke,' restrain, make of none effect: *cf.* ii. 3, note. 'devourer,' probably with especial reference to the locust: *cf.* Joel i—ii.

12. 'call you blessed,' because of the 'blessing' from God (iii. 10), where however the Hebrew word is different; it is the same as here in iii. 15, but there it is used paradoxically.

II. Jehovah's righteous judgment. (cc. III. 13—IV.)

Reward and punishment

13 Your words have been stout against me,
Saith Jehovah;
Yet ye say,
'Wherein have we conversed against thee?'
14 Ye have said,
'It is vain to serve God;
And what profit is it
That we have kept his command,
And that we have walked in mourning
Before Jehovah of hosts?
15 And now ourselves call the proud blessed,
Yea, they that work wickedness are built up,
Yea, they tempt God,
And they escape!'

13—21. *Reward and punishment.* This section is in the main an encouragement to the good who are perplexed (see especially iii. 16), and the mention of punishment for the wicked in iii. 19, 21, is only inserted to make the divine answer complete; in this way the section differs from ii. 17—iii. 6, a section which to a larger extent contains menace to the bad. It also differs from it in being adequately explained by the last judgment, without any apparent element of compenetration. The Hebrew versification is followed throughout the chapter; but the versions at iii. 19 begin a fourth chapter, the verses of which are indicated in brackets.

13. The usual challenge leads to the complaint being developed: *cf.* Introd., p. xv: also ii. 17, introducing the somewhat similar section.

14. 'in mourning,' outward in dress and behaviour as well as inward; a mourning due in the main to all the offences against Jehovah already detailed, but all the bitterer because 'they that work wickedness are built up' (iii. 15). The proper spirit of Old Testament religion was one of praise and trustful joy.

15. 'ourselves' is emphatic: even we, who would most readily believe the contrary. 'call blessed': the same word as in iii. 12, with marked antithesis. 'the proud,' those who behave arrogantly towards God: the word is used again in iii. 19. 'they tempt,' making trial of God by their wickedness: the same word is translated 'try' in iii. 10. With that verse also there is doubtless an intentional contrast.

Thus have they conversed each with his fellow, 16
That feared Jehovah,
And Jehovah hath hearkened
And he hath heard;
Yea, a book of remembrance
Hath been written before him,
Regarding them that fear Jehovah
And that think upon his name.
And they shall be my treasure, 17
Saith Jehovah of hosts,
In the day wherein I do;
And I will have compassion on them, as a man
hath compassion
On his own son, who serveth him.
Then shall ye again discern 18
Between the just and the wicked,
Between him that serveth God,
And him that serveth him not. IV.
For behold, the day is coming, 19 (1)
Burning as an oven,

16. 'a book of remembrance': probably an allusion to the custom of the Persian kings of keeping a list of those who had rendered them signal service: *cf.* Esther ii. 23: vi. 1—3: Herodotus viii. 85, with How and Wells *ad loc.* (*A Commentary on Herodotus*, Oxford, 1912).

17. 'treasure,' peculiar treasure or possession, as in Exod. xix. 5. The same word is also used in Deut. xiv. 2, and elsewhere, and underlies the Greek of Tit. ii. 14: I Pet. ii. 9: Eph. i. 14. 'in the day wherein I do,' *i.e.*, in the day that I take action, here and in iii. 21, seems better than 'in the day which I make,' the chief alternative. 'who serveth him,' living with him and working under him: not necessarily '*while* he serveth him.' He will overlook offences, *etc.* As the prophecy nears its end there is a return to the protest of love with which it opened.

18. 'discern between the just and the wicked' in the light of actual events, by the different ways in which Jehovah treats them, as explained in the following verses.

19. 'an oven.' Probably a hole in the ground is meant, such as is still to be seen in Palestine, in the shape of a large jar, plastered with cement; the fuel is grass, thorns or twigs (*cf.* Matt. vi. 30: Luke xii. 28). Broad,

And all the proud and all the workers of wickedness
Shall be stubble,
And the day that cometh shall burn them up,
Saith Jehovah of hosts,
So as to leave them neither root nor branch;
(2) 20 But for you that fear my name
There shall rise the sun of justness,
With healing in its wings,
And ye shall go forth and gambol
As calves of the stall;
(3) 21 And ye shall tread down the wicked,
For they shall be ashes
Beneath the soles of your feet
In the day wherein I do,
Saith Jehovah of hosts.

(4) 22 Moses and Elijah
Remember ye the law of Moses my servant,
Which I commanded him
On Horeb for all Israel,

thin loaves are quickly baked against the concave inner surface of the 'oven' when sufficiently heated. But the prophet passes at once to the picture of a far mightier conflagration, such as that described in Isai. x. 16—19, *etc.* 'stubble': *cf.* Isai. v. 24, *etc.* 'neither root nor branch': *cf.* Job xviii. 16. The 3rd line refers back to iii. 15.

20. 'the sun of justness,' probably so called as ushering in 'the day' (iii. 17, 19, 21) wherein justness shall have its full reward, 'with healing' and 'compassion' (iii. 17) for the sufferings hinted at in iii. 14 (where see note). 'in its wings,' *i.e.*, in its progress over the earth: *cf.* Ps. cxxxix (cxxxviii). 9. The phrase 'at once suggests the winged solar disk of Egypt, Babylonia, Assyria, and Persia' (Powis Smith, *ad loc.*), so that the figure might be a familiar one. 'calves of the stall,' implying care and good feeding.

21. 'in the day wherein I do': *cf.* iii. 17, note.

22—24. (iv. 4—6). *Moses and Elijah.* The prophecy concludes with a final appeal to the Law and the prophets, represented by Moses and Elijah, as at the Transfiguration (Matt. xvii. 3, *etc.*). But Elijah not

Even statutes and judgments.
Behold, I am sending you 23 (5)
Elijah the prophet
Before the coming of the day of Jehovah,
The great and terrible day;
And he shall turn again the heart 24 (6)
Of the fathers to their children,
And the heart of the children to their fathers,
Lest I come and strike
The land with destruction.

merely represents prophecy in the past; in II (IV) Kings ii he is said to have been taken from the earth alive, and here to be about to return before the last day. He is probably one of the 'two witnesses' of Apoc. xi. 3, where see note. Between Elijah as thus the herald of Christ's second coming and St. John the Baptist as the herald of Christ's first coming a certain compenetration is indicated in the New Testament: *cf.* Introd., p. xxxiv, and the gospel passages there quoted. Such a compenetration serves to link up the mention of Elijah here with the important section opening with iii. 1.

22. 'Even statutes and judgments,' giving the content of 'the law of Moses': *cf.* Deut. iv. 8: Levit. xxvi. 46 (45). The former word perhaps has a more general meaning, and the latter that of particular decisions; but this is uncertain.

23—24. *Cf.* Ecclcus. xlviii. 10.

23. 'day' is not repeated in the Hebrew. 'The day of Jehovah' is a frequent theme of the prophets, capable of embracing within itself by force of compenetration any particular crisis and messianic times and the end of the world. In the paper indicated in the Introd., p. xxxiv, an example is taken from Joel ii. 1, 11: ii. 31 (iii. 4): iii. (iv). 14.

24. The one point mentioned at the end, and pressed home with a threat of destruction, is mutual love within the family, doubtless with a reference to the protest against heathen marriages and divorce in ii. 10—16. The introduction of the children into the argument is thus as significant as Our Lord's own passage from the reprobation of divorce to the blessing of children (Matt. xix. 3—15: Mark x. 2—16). The turning of the children's hearts to their fathers is omitted in the use of this verse in Ecclcus xlviii. 10: Luke i. 17, but is to be regarded as implicitly included (so Lagrange on Luke i. 17). 'destruction,' *lit.*, the 'devoting' of a person or thing to Jehovah by the utter destruction thereof and by the consequent renunciation of any use of it or profit from it: *cf.* Levit. xxvii. 28—29: Jos. vii: *etc.* But in this verse the main emphasis seems to be on the consequent destruction as such.

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